

26 Feb 03

Dear Colleagues,

As the Navy-wide exams for E-4 through E-6 approach, and the selection boards for the E-9/E-8 candidates near their March convening dates, many RPs are anxiously scrutinizing their careers. The E-7 candidates who recently found themselves "Selection Board Eligible" will undergo similar feelings of anxiety in July when the E-7 selection board draws near. Perhaps you are among those wondering if you have studied hard enough or made the right duty choices to be competitive for promotion.

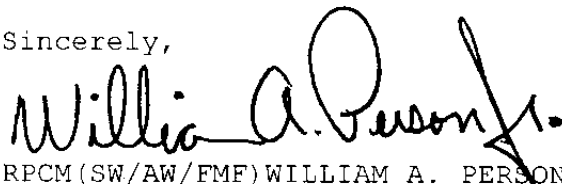
The challenges of balancing family, career, off-duty education and community involvement can be overwhelming. For some of you, finding the time and mental discipline to prepare for advancement may seem all but impossible. And I know that many of you will go take the exams or await the selection board results in hazardous duty or imminent danger zones. Living and working day after day in harm's way is an experience most of our fellow citizens will never encounter in a lifetime. Sailors are indeed a special breed.

Every RP competing for advancement has heard the all-to-familiar cliché: "studying hard for exams and sustained superior performance" are the key ingredients for promotion. And these are certainly important elements in the "magic formula" for success. But I consider perseverance equally important. Webster's defines perseverance as: "to persist in a state, enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counterinfluences, opposition or discouragement."

Our advancement system is designed to ensure that there are more qualified Sailors than quotas for them to fill. This makes the ability to persevere crucial. Coach John Wooden led the UCLA Bruins to 10 NCAA College Basketball championships. Coach Wooten defined success, not as winning every contest, but as the peace of mind that comes from knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.

Continue to enhance your knowledge and skills as a Religious Program Specialist. Be or become a true specialist. Be enthusiastic and stay positive, and you will persevere. Good luck to each of you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William A. Person, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

RPCM(SW/AW/FMF) WILLIAM A. PERSON, JR.
Senior Enlisted Advisor to
the Chief of Navy Chaplains